



Filing Process

Filing a civil case is a three-part process: 1) file the complaint, 2) file the civil cover sheet, and 3) file the attorney appearance. Instructions for completing each of these tasks are provided in this document.

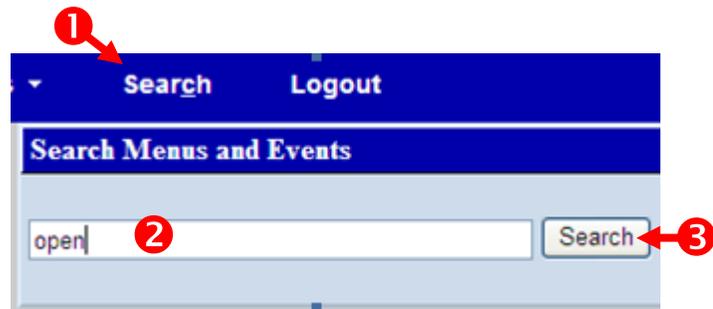
Payment of Filing Fees

- ✓ Review the General Order regarding refund of filing fees paid electronically. The full order is available at <http://10.205.15.104/PRESS/GeneralOrder102607.PDF>. The applicable excerpt is provided at the end of this document.
- ✓ Payment for filing fees will be made through [Pay.gov](https://www.pay.gov), a service used by the District Court to process filing fees. Pay.gov is **NOT** a department of, or managed by the District Court.
- ✓ Pay.gov accepts Visa[®], MasterCard[®], Discover[®], American Express[®] and Diners Club International[®]. **Debit cards are not accepted for payment at this time.**

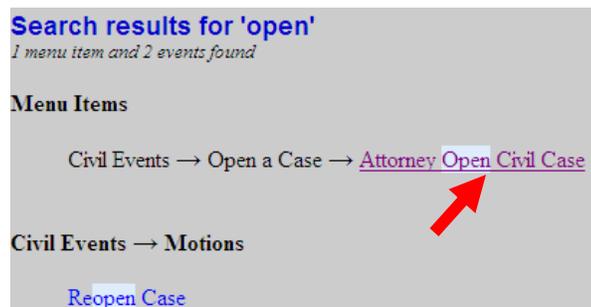
Miscellaneous

- ✓ The Clerk's Office will designate a judge and designate a magistrate judge once an attorney opens a case. The filing attorney will receive an electronic notification of the assignment.
- ✓ **Do not** e-file a summons when opening a case. Email the summons to intake_ilnd@ ilnd.uscourts.gov **AFTER** you receive notification of the judge assignment.

1. Click **Search** on the menu bar.
2. Type **Open** in the box.
3. Click the **Search** button.



-
4. Click **Attorney Open Civil Case**.



-
5. Leave the default settings.
 6. Click **Next**.

A screenshot of a form titled "Open a Civil Case". The form has a grey background. At the top, the title "Open a Civil Case" is displayed in blue. Below the title, there are three fields: "Office" with a dropdown menu showing "Chicago", "Case type" with a dropdown menu showing "cv", and "Case number" which is empty. Below these is the text "Date filed 4/13/2009". There are two more input fields: "Other court name" and "Other court number", both of which are empty. At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: "Next" and "Clear".

7. Select the appropriate responses. Your responses should reflect the Civil Cover Sheet.
8. Click **Next**.

Note: **Demand amounts should be entered as follows:**

75,000 = 75
100,000 = 100
1,000,000 or over = 9999

The screenshot shows the 'Open a Civil Case' form with the following values: Jurisdiction: 4 (Diversity); Cause of action: 28:1332mf ((28:1332 Diversity - Mortgage Foreclosure)); Nature of suit: 220 (Real Property: Foreclosure); Origin: 1 (Original Proceeding); Citizenship plaintiff: 5 (Incorporated/Principal Place of Business-Other State); Citizenship defendant: 1 (Citizen of This State); Jury demand: n (None); Class action: n; Demand (\$000): 100; Arbitration code: (empty); County: Cook; Fee status: pd (paid); Fee date: 4/17/2009; Date transfer: (empty). There are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons at the bottom.

9. Enter the filing party name. If the party is a business, enter the complete business name in the **Last/Business Name** field.

The screenshot shows the 'Open a Civil Case' form with the search for a party section. The 'Last/Business Name' field contains 'Harris Bank', and the 'First Name' and 'Middle Name' fields are empty. There are 'Search' and 'Clear' buttons below the input fields.

10. Click **Next**.

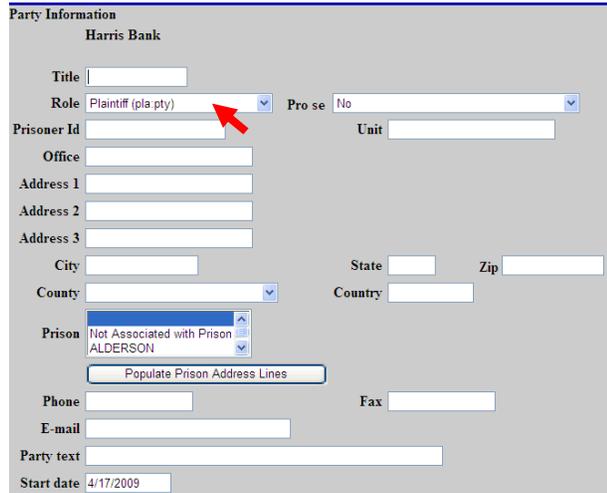
Do not use all uppercase. Only the first initial of each name should be uppercase, as illustrated in the above example.

11. Select the name of the filing party.

If the party does not exist, click **Create new party** and go to step 15.

The screenshot shows the ECF system interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', 'Reports', and 'Utilities'. Below the search for a party section, the 'Party search results' section shows 'Harris Bank' as a result. A red arrow points to the 'Harris Bank' result. There are 'Select name from list' and 'Create new party' buttons at the bottom.

- 12. A. Verify that the party name is correct. If incorrect, click **BACK** and re-enter.
- B. Select the correct **party role**.
- C. Click **Submit**.



13. Repeat steps 9-12 to add all parties.

Complete steps 14 - 19 if the party to be added to the case is **not** in the CM/ECF database.



Create a New Party

A search for Lulu Smith reveals that she is not in the database.

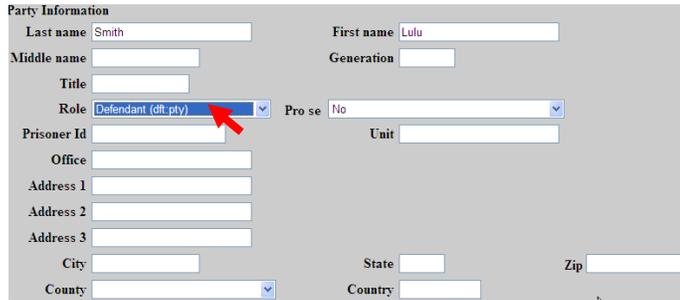
14. Click **Create new party**.



In this example, we are searching for Lulu Smith. Smith is not in the database and must be added.

Opening a Civil Case Part I – File the Complaint

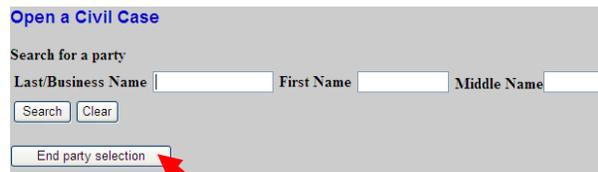
- The name you searched for displays. Make any necessary corrections to the spelling of the name.
- Select the **Role**. *Do not enter any other information about the party.*
- Click **Submit**.



Party Information

Last name	Smith	First name	Lulu
Middle name		Generation	
Title			
Role	Defendant (dft pty)	Pro se	No
Prisoner Id		Unit	
Office			
Address 1			
Address 2			
Address 3			
City		State	
County		Country	

-
- Once all parties have been entered, click **End party selection**.



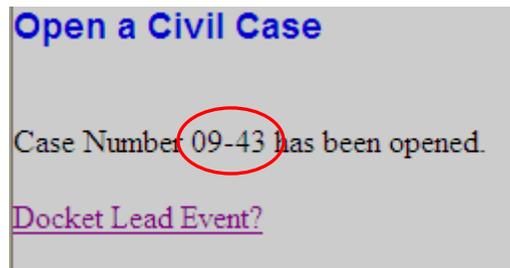
Open a Civil Case

Search for a party

Last/Business Name First Name Middle Name

-
- The case is now open and CM/ECF assigns the case number.

WRITE DOWN the case number shown on the screen for future reference.



Open a Civil Case

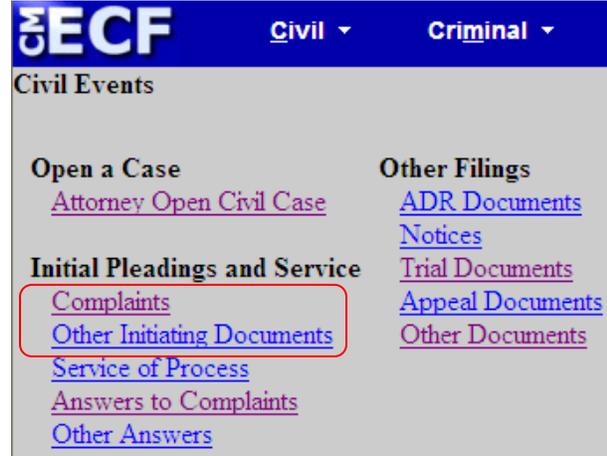
Case Number 09-43 has been opened.

[Docket Lead Event?](#)

20. Click **CIVIL** on the menu bar.

21. A. If you are filing a complaint, click **Complaints**.

B. If this is a **notice of removal** or a **miscellaneous filing**, click Other Initiating Documents.



22. The case number with the party names displays. Click **Next**.



23. If you are filing a complaint, select **Complaint** and click **Next**.

Complaints
1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith

Start typing to find another event.

Available Events (click to select events)

- Amended Complaint
- Complaint**
- Counterclaim
- Crossclaim
- Intervenor Complaint
- Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus
- Third Party Complaint

Selected Events (click to remove events)

- Complaint

Next Clear

To deselect an event, click on its name in the **Selected Events** box.

If this is a **miscellaneous filing**, select the applicable case description and click **Next**. In this example, the case description is a Notice of Removal.

Other Initiating Documents
1:09-cv-00119 Rogers

Start typing to find another event.

Available Events (click to select events)

- Bankruptcy Appeal
- Civil Cover Sheet
- Findings of fact
- Miscellaneous Case
- Motion to Vacate/Set Aside/Correct Sentence (2255)
- Notice of Condemnation
- Notice of Removal**
- Notice to Take Foreign Deposition
- Petition to Enforce IRS Summons
- Petition to Perpetuate Testimony
- Received Complaint
- Received Petition
- Registration of Foreign Judgment

Selected Events

- Notice of Removal

Next Clear

24. Select the filing party and click **Next**.

If you forgot to add a party, click **Add/Create New Party** and follow steps 9-18.

Complaints
1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith

Select the filer.

Select the Party:

- Harris Bank [Plaintiff]
- Smith, Lulu [Defendant]

[Add/Create New Party](#)

Next Clear

25. A. Leave the party name and **Notice** boxes checked for the **filing** attorney.
- B. Check the Lead box if the **filing** attorney is the lead attorney.
- C. **Uncheck** all boxes next to parties **not** represented by the filing attorney.

The following attorney/party associations do not exist for the above case(s).
Please check the box on the left of the screen for associations which should be created.
If the association should *not* be created, be sure the box is *unchecked*<

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harris Bank (pty:pla) represented by Ryan Crowe (aty)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice
<input type="checkbox"/> Lulu Smith (pty:dft) represented by Ryan Crowe (aty)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead	<input type="checkbox"/> Notice
<input type="checkbox"/> James Paul Smith (pty:dft) represented by Ryan Crowe (aty)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead	<input type="checkbox"/> Notice

Select all

Next Clear

This screen allows to you link the attorney to the party and allows the attorney to receive a Notification of Electronic Filing.

The **only** boxes that should be checked are related to the filing attorney. **UNCHECK** all boxes that display the name or client of another attorney. In this example, the boxes for the Smiths are unchecked as the filing attorney does not represent them.

26. Select the defendant and click **Next**.

Complaints
1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith

Please select the party that this filing is **against**.

Select the Party: OR Select a Group:

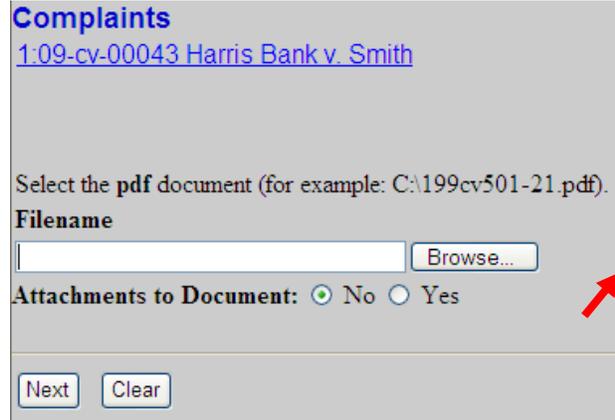
[Add/Create New Party](#)

No Group
 All Defendants
 All Plaintiffs
 All Parties

Next Clear

To select more than one party, hold the CTRL key on your keyboard and click each party to be included.

27. Click **Browse** to search for the pdf document that you want to file.



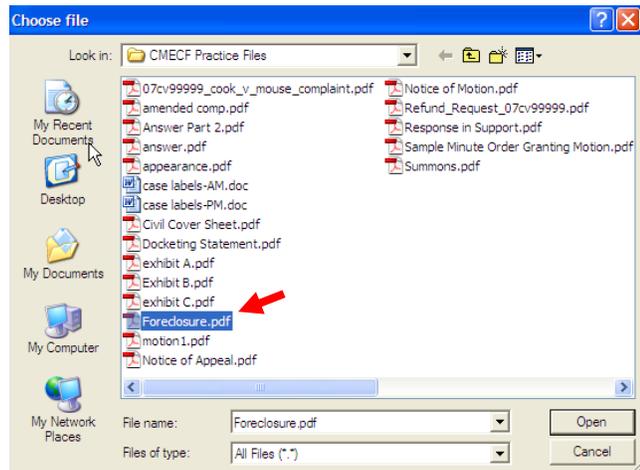
28. Select the complaint and click **Open**.

You will need to search your computer and locate the case folder and appropriate document. The graphic shown is for illustrative purposes, only.

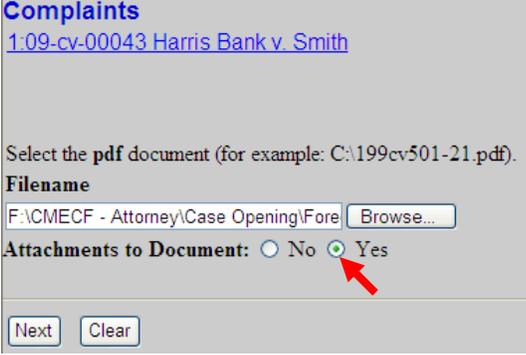
ONLY the complaint is filed at this time.

>> Exhibits in support of the complaint may be included as attachments.

>> File the Civil Cover Sheet and Attorney Appearance separately.



29. To include an attachment (such as an exhibit, or if the complaint is divided into sections) click the **Yes** radio button then click **Next**.



Complaints
[1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith](#)

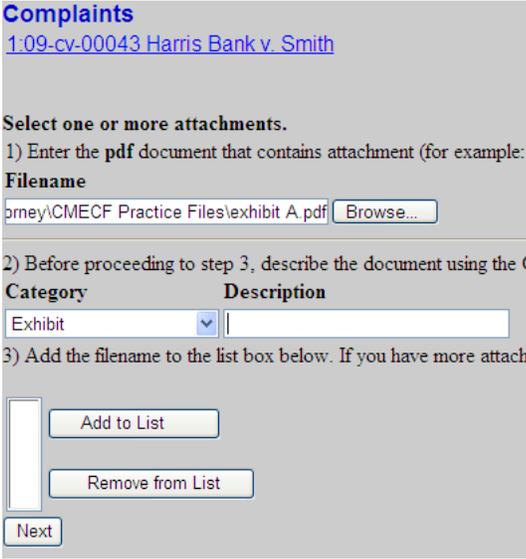
Select the **pdf** document (for example: C:\199cv501-21.pdf).

Filename
F:\CMECF - Attorney\Case Opening\Fore [Browse...]

Attachments to Document: No Yes

[Next] [Clear]

30. Click **Browse** and select the file to be uploaded as an attachment.
31. Select a category and/or type a description of the attachments.
33. Click **Add to List**.
34. Click **Next**.



Complaints
[1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith](#)

Select one or more attachments.

1) Enter the **pdf** document that contains attachment (for example:
Filename
omey\CMECF Practice Files\exhibit A.pdf [Browse...]

2) Before proceeding to step 3, describe the document using the C
Category **Description**
Exhibit []

3) Add the filename to the list box below. If you have more attach

[Add to List]
[Remove from List]

[Next]

For Notice of Removal and Registration of Foreign Judgment, only.

35. If this is a **Notice of Removal**, enter the name and case number of the other court and click **Next**.

Other Initiating Documents
[1:09-cv-00119 Rogers](#)

Enter name of other court :

Enter case number in other court :

If this is a **Registration of Foreign Judgment**, enter the requested information and click **Next**.

Other Initiating Documents
[1:09-cv-00119 Rogers](#)

Enter the originating District name :

Enter the originating District case number :

Enter who the judgment was for :

Enter who the judgment was against :

Enter amount of judgment :

Enter date of judgment :

Enter **Y**.

Other Initiating Documents
[1:09-cv-00119 Rogers](#)

Do you want to terminate this miscellaneous case at this time? Enter y or n:

For complaints, only.

31. Type **Jury Demand** if applicable and click **Next**.

In this example, no Jury Demand is included.

Complaints
1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith

If this complaint includes a jury demand, type **Jury Demand** in box :

32. Type **N**.

A credit card is required to pay the filing fee through pay.gov.

Complaints
1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith

Is this filed with an Application to Proceed Without Prepayment of Fees Y/N?

or

Is this complaint filed on behalf of the USA Y/N?

33. Click **Next**.

Fee: \$350

34. Click **Next**.

Complaints
1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith

After you pay the filing fee **YOU MUST RETURN TO THE COURT'S WEBSITE** to complete your transaction.

The transaction is completed when you see the Notification of Electronic Filing.

35. Wait for the processing screen to display.



36. Follow the prompts and enter your credit card information.

The payment amount displayed reflects the appropriate fee for the type document being filed.

Click [HERE](#) to exit without paying and correct any mistakes.

37. Check the box authorizing the charge. If this box is not checked the filing fee cannot be processed.

38. To have a receipt emailed to you, enter your email address in both boxes.

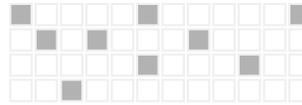
39. Click **Submit Payment**.

Enter email address for receipt.

Check this box to authorize the charge.

40. Wait until your credit card charge has been processed.

Your request is being processed. Please wait.



41. Click **Yes** to return to CM/ECF.

If you do not select yes, you will not return to the Court's website to complete your transaction. Your credit card will be billed, but your complaint will NOT be filed.



42. Add any desired text to the docket entry and click **Next**.



If you are filing a Notice of Removal, enter the names of the documents included in the Notice of Removal.

43. Verify that the docket entry is correct and that you uploaded the correct file.

44. Click **Next**.

Verify that this is the file that you intended to upload. →



Wait for the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) to display. Make sure that you either print a copy of the NEF for reference or write down the case number and document number. You will need these numbers in the event that the clerk's office requests that you resubmit any PDF documents.

Once you have e-filed the complaint you may then e-file the Civil Cover Sheet and Attorney Appearance separately.

Complaints

[1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith](#)

United States District Court

Northern District of Illinois - CM/ECF TEST, Ver 3.2.2

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered by Test, Attorney on 4/17/2009 at 2:22 PM CDT and filed on 4/17/2009

Case Name: Harris Bank v. Smith

Case Number: [1:09-cv-43](#)

Filer: Harris Bank

Document Number: [1](#)

Docket Text:

COMPLAINT filed by Harris Bank; Filing fee \$ 1, receipt number 0752000000000168728.(Test, Attorney)

1:09-cv-43 Notice has been electronically mailed to:

Attorney Test nelida_finch@ilnd.uscourts.gov

1:09-cv-43 Notice has been delivered by other means to:

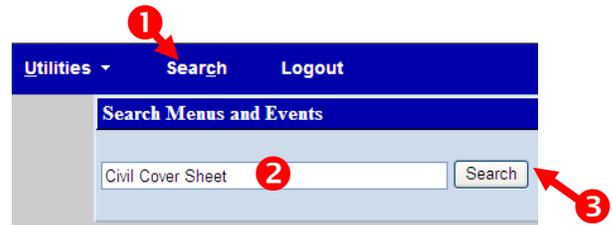
The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:

I

Shown below is a sample receipt generated by Pay.gov. To generate a receipt you must enter your email address at the prompt on the Pay.gov screen.

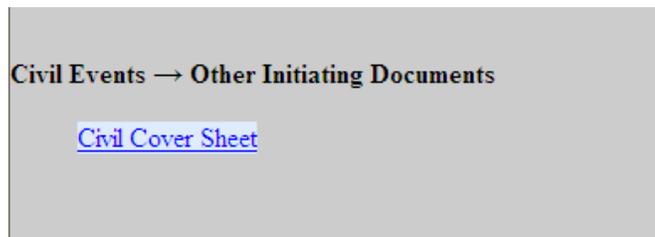


1. Click **Search** on the menu bar.
2. Type **Civil Cover Sheet** in the box.
3. Click the **Search** button.



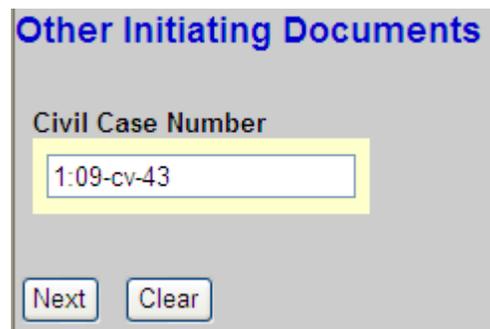
A sample Civil Cover Sheet is provided at the end of this section.

4. Click **Civil Cover Sheet**.



5. Verify that the case number is correct and click **Next**.

If the case number is incorrect click the browser back button and type the correct case number and click **Next**.



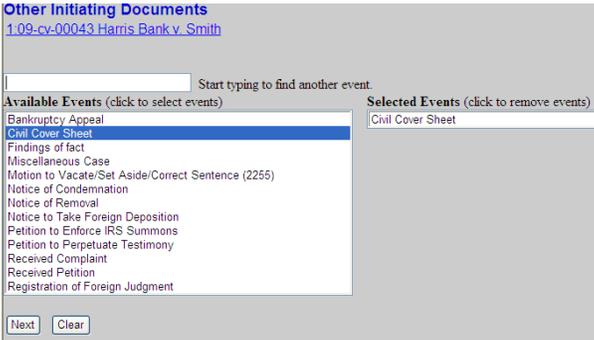
6. Click **Next**.



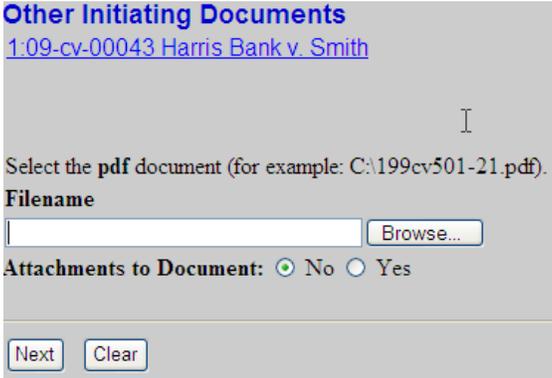
**Opening a Civil Case
Part II – File the Civil Cover Sheet**

7. Select **Civil Cover Sheet**.

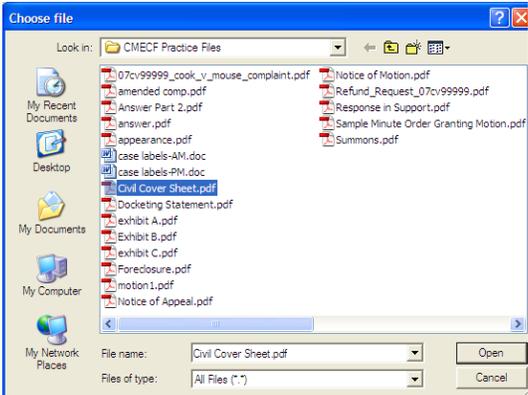
8. Click **Next**.



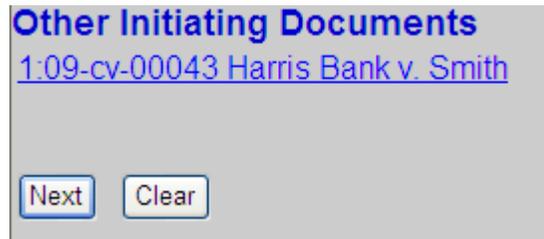
9. Click **Browse**.



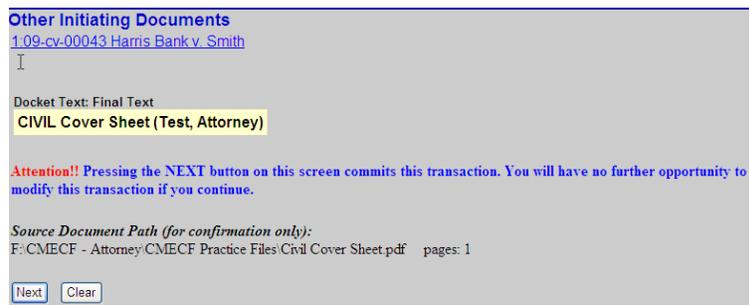
10. Select the **Civil Cover Sheet** to be filed and click **Open**.



11. Click **Next**.



12. Verify that the docket entry is correct and the correct file has been uploaded.



13. Click **Next**.

Wait for the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) to display. Make sure that you either print a copy of the NEF for reference or write down the case number and document number. You will need these numbers in the event that the clerk's office requests that you resubmit any PDF documents.

Other Initiating Documents

[1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith](#)

United States District Court

Northern District of Illinois - CM/ECF TEST, Ver 3.2.2

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered by Test, Attorney on 4/17/2009 at 2:40 PM CDT and filed on 4/17/2009

Case Name: Harris Bank v. Smith

Case Number: [1:09-cv-43](#)

Filer:

Document Number: [2](#)

Docket Text:

[CIVIL Cover Sheet \(Test, Attorney\)](#)

1:09-cv-43 Notice has been electronically mailed to:

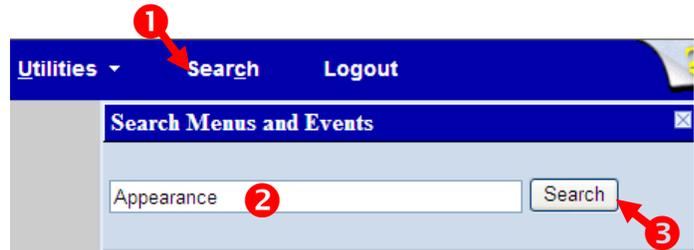
Attorney Test nelida_finch@ilnd.uscourts.gov

1:09-cv-43 Notice has been delivered by other means to:

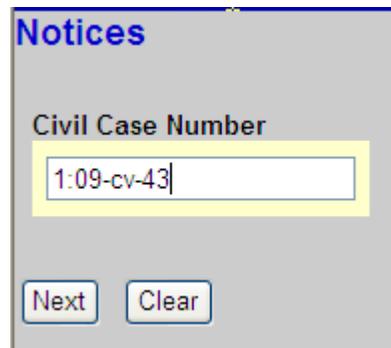
The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:

***** EACH ATTORNEY MUST FILE HIS OR HER OWN APPEARANCE
USING THEIR ASSIGNED CM/ECF LOGIN AND PASSWORD. *****

1. Click the **Search** link.
2. Type **Appearance** in the search box.
3. Click the **Search** button.



4. Enter the case number and click **Next**.



5. Verify that the case number is correct and click **Next**.

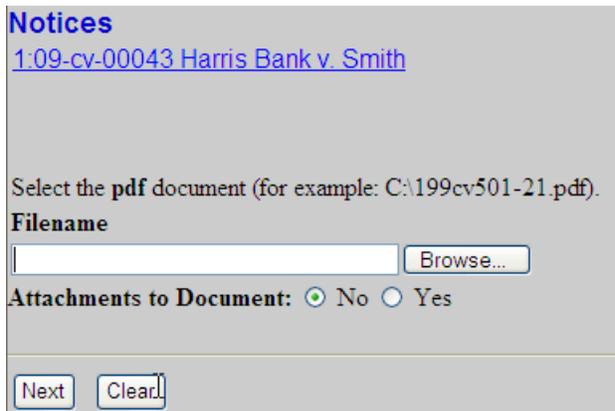
If the case number is incorrect click the browser back button and type the correct case number and click **Next**.



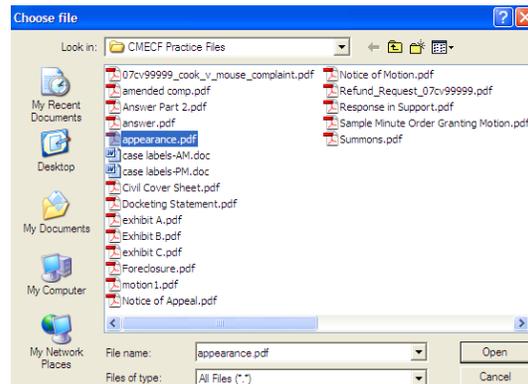
6. Select **Attorney Appearance** and click **Next**.



7. Click **Browse**.



8. Select the **Attorney Appearance** and click **Open**.



9. Click **Next**.

Notices
[1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith](#)

Select the pdf document (for example: C:\199cv501-21.pdf).

Filename
F:\CMECF - Attorney\CMECF Practice Fi

Attachments to Document: No Yes

10. Select the part(ies) that the filing attorney represents and click **Next**.

Notices
[1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith](#)

Select the filer.

Select the Party:

Harris Bank [Plaintiff] [Add/Create New Party](#)
Smith, Lulu [Defendant]

11. Click **Next**.

Notices
[1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith](#)

Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate.

ATTORNEY Appearance for Plaintiff Harris Bank by Ryan Crowe (Crowe, Ryan)

12. Verify that the docket entry is correct and the correct file has been uploaded.
13. Click **Next**.

Notices
[1:09-cv-00043 Harris Bank v. Smith](#)

Docket Text: Final Text
ATTORNEY Appearance for Plaintiff Harris Bank by Ryan Crowe (Crowe, Ryan)

Attention!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue.

Source Document Path (for confirmation only):
F:\CMECF - Attorney\CMECF Practice Files\appearance.pdf pages: 1

Wait for the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) to display. Make sure that you either print a copy of the NEF for reference or write down the case number and document number. You will need these numbers in the event that the clerk's office requests that you resubmit any PDF documents.

Notices
[1:09-cv-00039 Smith](#)

United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois - CMECF TEST, Ver 3.2.2

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered by Rogers, Paula on 4/16/2009 at 10:36 AM CDT and filed on 4/16/2009

Case Name: Smith
Case Number: [1:09-cv-39](#)
Filer: James Smith
Document Number: [1](#)

Docket Text:
ATTORNEY Appearance for Plaintiff James Smith by Paula Rogers (Rogers, Paula)

1:09-cv-39 Notice has been electronically mailed to:
Paula Rogers paula_rogers@ilnd.courts.gov, ted@yahoo.com

1:09-cv-39 Notice has been delivered by other means to:
The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
ILLINOIS**

GENERAL ORDER 09 – 014

GENERAL ORDER ON ELECTRONIC CASE FILING

Excerpt regarding refund of erroneous or duplicate payments:

(D) The Clerk of Court is hereby granted the authority to authorize refunds upon written request by a party who has inadvertently made erroneous or duplicate payments on line. All approved refunds shall be processed through the electronic credit card system. In the event that a particular attorney or law firm continues to make repeated mistakes when submitting fees and requesting refunds, the Clerk of Court may request that the Court issue an order to show cause why further requests for refunds should be considered. If a credit card transaction is invalid for any reason or if the credit card processing function in CM/ECF is experiencing problems, payment must be made within two business days. Summons will not be issued until the fee is paid by credit card, check, cash, or money order. If the case is an emergency filing, the filer must bring the paper document.